SIATRAS NUMISMATIC STUDIES, 4

Jean N. Svoronos

CONSTANTINIAN COINAGE
THE DELOS HOARD / 1909

Edited, translated into English and published by Demetrius Siatras

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Jean N. Svoronos (1863-1922)

Constantinian Coinage - The Delos Hoard / 1909

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PREFACE

The excavations on Delos island, by the French Archaeological School at Athens, are a real mine of enrichment of our Numismatic Museum with great numismatic finds that shed light on the numismatics and the history of this very island. The finds, especially those consisted of Roman and Byzantine coins, belong to the absolutely dark eras of its history and are very important from this point of view, deserving our study and attention.[1]

We publish here the detailed description of an important find of the 1909 excavations, *i.e.* a hoard of Roman copper coins belonging to the so-called *Constantinian coinage*, which the French numismatist Jules Maurice has successfully been studying for years; he has published in specific journals a complete series of papers on each one of the 19 mints of the era separately, as well as the [three volumes of his great work *Numismatique constantinienne* (Paris, 1908-1912)].

The current description of the Delos' hoard can also teach a lot of things to numismatists and historians, so that they might approach more thoroughly and judge themselves its history, since nothing is indeed more didactic than the finds when they are offered integral to be studied by the scholars. We proceed therefore to a few introductory numismatic remarks.

The find emerged in 1909; it consists of 3,797 copper coins of medium and, mostly, small size *"found in a ceramic pot embedded in the Byzantine wall of an ancient house towards the Southern side of the Square Market"*. Orders of the Director of the French School M. Holleaux, the curator of Delos' antiquities Demosthenes Peppas carried the find to Athens and delivered it to the Numismatic Museum on January 4th, 1910.

[1] Von Schoeffer, Delos: Pauly-Wissova, Real-Encyclopädie, tome IV, p. 2500.

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As a rule, the preservation of the coins is fine; just a few of them are excellent (*fleur de coin*), worn or totally destroyed. In general one can immediately see that it's very circulated coins, therefore suffered of analogous damage; and, of course, the whole of it was the cashier of a small shopkeeper of the daily petty trade on the island. The heavy damage of some coins is due to the corrosion caused during the burial. A skillful workman of the French School cleaned the hoard in situ; then the cleaning was completed in the Athens' Numismatic Museum as far as it was necessary for the exact recognition and description of the inscriptions, types and symbols of the mint of each coin.

Each part of the hoard was deposited separately in the collections of the Museum, so that it can be re-used in the future for a more detailed numismatic study.

The Museum also possesses another two important numismatic finds of the same kings, the hoards of Tanagra and Egypt.

The coins were at first registered in the Catalogue according to the chronological succession of the emperors, to whom they belong; but those belonging to each emperor were not registered chronologically, but according to Cohen's method, so that the researchers can easily look for them, *i.e.* following the alphabetical order of the inscriptions on the reverse side. Then the coins of each inscription are classified according to the mint in alphabetical and not in geographical order, for the same practical reason. Finally, the products of each mint are recorded in homogeneous classes of workshops *(officines)*, but not following the chronological sequence of the various issues of them.

The emperors to whom the coins of the hoard belong are the following ones [newer research may have changed some dates]:

Claudius Gothicus	268–270 A.D.
Aurelian	270–275
Probus	276–282
Diocletian	284–305
Maximianus Herculius	286–305
Constantius I Chlorus	305–306
Galerius Maximianus	305–311
Valeria	† 315
Maximinus II Daza	308–313

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Maxentius	306–312
Romulus	† 309
Licinius I	307–323
Licinius II	† 326
Constantine I the Great	306–337
Crispus	† 326
Constantine II	335–340

In the whole find, only six coins belong to the first four rulers, of which three to Diocletian and one to each one of the other three. The number of pieces gets bigger and bigger from Maximianus Herculius, with the biggest number belonging to Licinius I and Constantine the Great, so that the whole find can be considered exactly as a hoard of the Constantinian coinage.

From Maximianus Herculius to the last, *i.e.* to Constantius II, the succession of the rulers is continuous; not represented in the find are the British emperors *Carausius* (287–293 A.D.) and *Allectus* (293–297); *Helena* wife of Constantius Chlorus (+328) and *Theodora* [also] wife of Constantius Chlorus; *Severus II* (305–308, caesar); *Domitius Alexander* (311, in Africa); *Constantia* wife of Licinius II (+330); *Valens* (314, in Dacia); *Martianus* (323, in Thrace); *Fausta* wife of Constantius I (326) and *Delmatius* nephew of Constantius I; and, finally, *Hannibalianus* king of Pontus (335–337 A.D.). However, their absence in Delos' find is very easily explained.

Seventeen mints have produced the coins of the Delos' hoard (from a total of 19 mints of the era):

Antiochia (Syria)	Aquileia, Ostia, Roma (Italy)
Alexandria (Egypt)	Siscia (Upper Pannonia)
Cyzicus (Mysia)	Carthago (Africa)
Nicomedia (Bithynia)	Tarraco (Spain)
Heraclea Thracium	Celtic Treviris
Thessalonica (Macedonia)	Londinium (England)
Serdica (Dacia)	Lugdunum, Arelas (France)

Only the mints of Sirmium (Pannonia) and Constantinopolis (Thrace) are missing.

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In the description, after the serial number (first column, black font), we note in parenthesis the number *(italics)* of the pieces of each variation found; the next number following by a dot denotes the diameter of the coin in mm.

SYMBOLS:

↺ reverse side.

[ ] Editor's additions.

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DESCRIPTION
OF THE ROMAN COPPER COINS FOUND AT DELOS
(268–340 A.D.)

[THE CATALOGUE CONTAINS ONLY COPPER COINS]

EXERGUE

Claudius Gothicus *(268 - 270 AD)*

1. *(1)* 22 mm. — IMP C CLAVDIVS AVG.
Bust crowned with rays, r.
ᘯ VIRT-VS AVG. *Athena* leaning her right arm against her spear and her left arm on her shield (Cohen VI, 161, 316). — *

2. *(1)* ***Aurelianus*** *(270 - 275 AD)*
23.— IMP AVRELIANVS AVG. Bust crowned with rays and wearing a cuirasse, r.
ᘯ VIRT MIL [ITVM]. The *emperor* wearing cuirasse and chlamys and standing to the right, leaning his right arm against his spear and holding a sphaere in his outstretched left hand; before him a soldier raises *Victory* with his right arm and diagonally holds his spear in his left hand (Cohen VI, 204, 261). — . . . (?)

3. *(1)* ***Probus*** *(276 - 282 AD)*
24.— IM-P C PROBVS P F AVG. Bust crowned with rays and wearing chlamys and cuirasse, l.; sceptre in the right hand. The cuirasse is ornamented with a stephanus.
ᘯ CONC-ORD-MILIT. *Eirene [Pax]* standing l. and holding a military flag in each hand. — E / PXXI

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EXERGUE

49. *(1)* 25.—MP C GAL VAL MAXIMIANVS P F AVG. Id.
ᑎ GENIO IMP-ERATORIS. Id.
(Alexandria)

50. *(1)* 25.— Id.
(Alexandria)

51. *(2)* 28.— Id., but IMP-E-RATORIS.
(Heraclea Thracium)

52. *(1)* 27.— Id.
(Heraclea Thracium)

53. *(1)* 27.— Id.
ᑎ GENIO POPV-LI ROMANI. Id.
(Nicomedia)

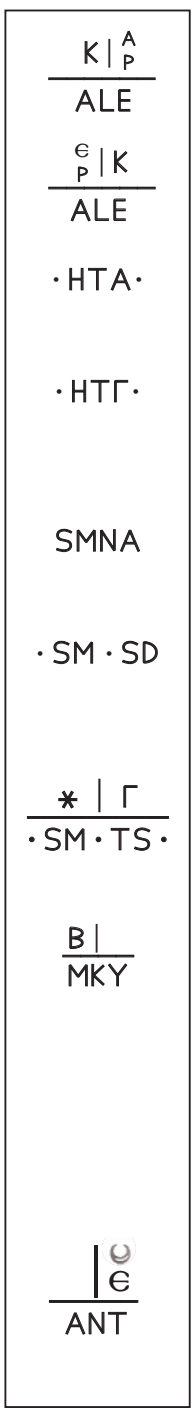
54. *(1)* 27.— Similar to the first one.
ᑎ GENIO POPV-L-I ROMANI. Id.
(Serdica)

55. *(2)* 27.— Id.
ᑎ VIRTVTI-EXERCITVS. *Mars Triumphant* marching to the right with extended spear.
(Thessalonica)

56. *(1)* 26.— Id., but VIRTVTI E-XERCITVS.
(Cyzicus)

Valeria *(† 315 AD)*

57. *(1)* 26. — GAL VAL-ERIA AVG.
Valeria's bust, r.
ᑎ VENERI V-ICTRICI. *Aphrodite* uprising an apple with her right arm and a fold of her dressing gown with the left. Altar in front of her.
(Antiochia)



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EXERGUE

276. *(1)* 22.— Id. (Antiochia)

277. *(1)* 22.— Id. (Antiochia)

278. *(1)* 22.— Id. (Antiochia)

279. *(1)* 22.— Id., but with laureate bust and cuirasse.
Ω IOVI CONSERVATORI AVG NN. Id.
(Antiochia)

280. *(1)* 22.— Id. (Antiochia)

281. *(2)* 22.— IMC C VAL LICIN LICINIVS P F AVG.
Head laureate, r.
Ω IOVI CONSER-VATORI AVGG.
(Alexandria)

282. *(1)* 22.— Id., but IOVI CONSE-RVATORI AVG.
(Alexandria)

283. *(1)* 22.— Id. (Alexandria)

284. *(2)* 22.— Id., but CONSER-VATORI AVGG.
(Alexandria)

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